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Jacksonville District

NEWS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers awards contract for Phase II military munitions cleanup at Brooksville

JACKSONVILLE, Fla. – The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers has awarded a \$1.25 million contract to Parsons of Norcross, Ga. to address munitions and related items in Phase II of the cleanup of the former Brooksville Turret Gunnery Range near Brooksville, Fla.

"Keeping our friends and neighbors in Brooksville safe and secure in their homes is vitally important. As the co-chair of the Unexploded Ordnances Caucus here in the U.S. House, I have taken a leadership role to help fund the ordnance cleanup efforts here in Hernando County and around the nation. While we have finished Phase I of the cleanup of the Brooksville Gunnery Range, there are more homes and properties that need to be protected from possible unexploded military ordnance. The Corps' announcement today guarantees that the process will continue and that families can once again feel safe in their backyards."

Phase I of the cleanup was completed by Environmental Chemical Corporation (ECC) in June 2006, at a total cost of approximately \$2.9 million. Phase II has been broken down into five steps. These steps are shown on the attached map. Work on the first step will begin this summer, and the subsequent steps will follow soon after, if needed.

Site work will begin after the contractor's work plans are coordinated with the public and approved by local, state, and federal authorities. Additionally, rights-of-entry must be obtained from the



individual property owners within the project boundary before the contractor can enter private property. To date, approximately 60 percent of the necessary rights-of-entry have been obtained.

Initial site work includes brush clearing and preparation of a geophysical map of the property, to identify where metal objects are buried. After analysis of the geophysical data, all targets of suspected military munitions items will be excavated and removed.

The former Brooksville Turret Gunnery Range was acquired by the War Department in 1943 and was used by the U.S. Army and the U.S. Air Force for infantry and turret gunnery training. It was officially closed shortly after World War II and many ordnance sweeps and clearances have been conducted since then; however, numerous practice and High Explosive ordnance items may remain, including bazooka rockets, mortar rounds, rifle grenades and other miscellaneous ordnance components. These items will typically be found beneath the ground's surface.

Cleanup is being addressed under the Military Munitions Response Program (MMRP) initiative of the Defense Environmental Restoration Program for Formerly Used Defense Sites (DERP-FUDS), to clean up properties which were owned, occupied or under the jurisdiction of the Department of Defense (DoD) and transferred prior to 1986. Congress designated the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to manage DERP-FUDS on behalf of the DoD.

During a successful Phase I of the project, which took place in two areas off of Weeping Willow Street near State Highway 50, more than 5,500 anomalies, or irregularities, were investigated. Two hundred eighty four rockets and 230 inert practice rounds, along with more than 11,000 pounds of non-ordnance-related scrap and more than 1,500 pounds of ordnance scrap were safely removed.

Extreme caution is advised if a suspected ordnance item is found. Corps officials warn that the public should follow the "3 Rs" of ordnance safety – **Recognize** that the item is potentially dangerous;



note the location of the item and **Retreat**, leaving it in place; and **Report** the item to local law enforcement officials, who are trained in proper safety procedures.

For more information, please contact the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers' Jacksonville District Corporate Communication Office at 904-232-2236.

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